THE

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CONTAINING

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On a late

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THE Hertford Letter.

SIR,

I Am favoured with Yours of the 20th Inst. whereby I perceive your pleasure is, That I should give you my Sentiments concerning Mrs. Sarah Stout's Death, the Trial, &c. In answer, I am very sensible of my own weakness, and how unfit I am to enter into a Controversie, wherein so many Doctors have been worried already: Nevertheless, in obedience to your reiterated Commands, though in doing so I may expose my own Ignorance, I shall give you my thoughts concerning the Natural Cause of Drowning, Floating of Dead Bodies afterwards, the various Sentiments of the Doctors, the manner of her Death, the Letters produced in Court, her Melancholiness, why no mention was made of the Money, and lastly, concerning two publick Experiments, whereof one was made here, and the other in the River of Thames.

It is a common Observation of most People, but used to dive, that upon their Plunging themselves in the Water, whether it be voluntarily or involuntarily they find a great Confusion of their Spirits; so that it is scarce possible for them to regulate their Actions in this surprize, by the Dictates of Reason; in this

Consternation they lay hold on any thing that comes in their way, not considering whether it may contribute to their Sinking or Swiming.

In this hurry of the Spirits, occasioned partly from the noise their fall makes in the Water, and partly from its running into their Ears, &c. The whole Animal Oeconomy is brought into Disorder; in this Confusion it is no ways Surprising, that Water, wherein they are immersed, should insinuate it self into some Vacuities, no ways adapted for its reception; and it being obvious to all, That no Man doth or can live without Respiration, whatever Element soever he is in; if in the Air, he sucks that in which naturally flows into the Lungs; if in Water, what comes into the Mouth, as long as his Senses continue, he swallows that down the Gullet, as long as he doth not Breath, there is little danger of Drowning; but on the first Inspiration, if he is at the surface of the Water, 'tis much if he doth not swallow down the Wind-pipe with the Air, some small quantity of Water; but if he is totally immersed in it, 'tis not improbable, that upon Inspiration, a far greater quantity of Water than Air will enter into the Cavity of the Lungs.

In every Expulsion of Air out of the Lungs, the *Epiglottis* is lifted up, if the Mouth at the same time should be full of Water, 'tis impossible but some of it will pass down the Wind-pipe, as is observable in those that accidentally Laugh while they are a drinking, if a drop falls into the *Asperæ arteriæ*, it will cause a Coughing, which is a Convulsive Motion of the Lungs, &c. whereby Nature doth commonly throw up any thing that doth casually fall upon them; by this Struggling of Nature, to expel the Water already flip'd down, the *Epiglottis* is lifted up, and instead of expelling the Wa-

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ter just swallowed, the Mouth being full of it, a great deal more forceth it self down, by its natural gravity, which gravitates the more, by reason of the Cylinder or Cone of the Air, that continually presseth on its Superficies; as soon the Senses are gone, the *Epiglottis* is kept open by the force of the Stream that runs into the Wind-pipe, till the *Bronchia*, and all their Ramifications, are filled; as long as the Senses continue, they swallow most of the Water that comes into their Mouths, into their Stomachs; but when they are near suffocated, the Water runs into those Ducts, where it meets with the least resistance.

So long as Life continues, there is a Convulsive Strugling of Nature, to expel out of the Lungs all those things that are noxious to them, especially Water, being never used to be Receptacles for any thing but Air, they use their utmost Efforts to eject it by a violent Contracting their Lobes nearer together; by these Exorbitant Contractions, the Water contained in the Ramifications of the *Bronchia*, &c. are sometimes forced in to the Cavity of the *Thorax*, either by dilating the Pores of the thin Membrane that invests the Lungs, as Quick-Silver is forced by the pressure of a Hand thro' a piece of Leather, or by the rupture of their Tunicle, or by some minute Vessels, not yet described by *Anatomists*. If any Practitioner in Physick, &c. shall assert, that *Anatomy* is brought to a *Ne plus ultra*, and that all Ducts, through which the Juices of Animals are strained, are detected. I would desire them to tell me through what Vessels the *Pus* in an *Empyema*, where the matter lies on the Midriff, when there is no Ulcer of the Lungs, is expectorated, or through what passages, when 'tis carried off by Urine, 'tis conveyed into the Kidneys, or how bitter Injections exit into the

Thomas, can affect the Mouth with its taste? as the Observations of Physicians do demonstrate; or let them read a Treatise of *Robert Boyle*, Esq; called, *New Experiments Physico-Mechanical*, touching the Spring of the Air; where, amongst many curious Observations about the Lungs, he asserts, *That the diligent Willisius relates, that he divers times observed in the Dissection of Live Bodies, that the Membrane that invests the Lungs had Pores in it as big as the larger sort of Peas.* p. 343.

Water is as frequently found in the Cavity of the *Abdomen* as of the *Thorax*; but by what Ducts or Passages, when there is no visible Rupture of the Coates of the Stomach nor Guts, they are carried there, I leave it to the Microscopical Anatomist to determine: I conceive it enough for me at present to tell you, that it is Fact. I am conscious you are not ignorant, that there are many things that happen in the Animal Oeconomy, that cannot be proved *a Priori*; yet when they are *a Posteriori*, they are admitted by the Schools, as undeniable Arguments; if any are so Sceptical as to deny what is not capable to be proved *a Priori*, they would be put to it to prove the Circulation of the Blood, Motion of the Animal Spirits, or where or how the Chile is Transcolated through the Coats of the Guts.

As soon as the Lungs, Stomach, &c. are full of Water, the Body naturally sinks, and rises no more till there is a Putrefaction in the inward parts, which in cold Countries is longer than in hotter Regions; but the sooner Putrifaction is begun, the sooner the Corps float, whereof no certain Calculation can be made, the time of their rising differing, with respect to the Region, and in the same Climate with respect

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to the Seasons of the Year; in these parts, according to the common reckoning, they float in Nine or Ten Days.

The common Cause assigned for Floating of Bodies drown'd, is, the breaking of the Gall, which you know is a vulgar Error; so that I need say nothing in opposition to it; The cause assigned by the Moderns, is Putrifaction, but how this Putrifaction renders the Body more boyant than 'twas before, is not obvious to every Eye, therefore I shall give you my thoughts concerning its *Modus agendi*, Putrifaction is a species of Fermentation; by Fermentation the Air contained in the Cavity of the Breast, Body, Stomach, *&c.* tho' seemingly full of Water, yet they contain, great quantities of Air, which is rarified with the other Juices, proportionable to the Degrees of Putrifaction; and this insensible dilatation of the Body increases gradually, till the Corruption hath made a passage through the Skin; so that a Person that is not above 20 Inches in Circuit when first drowned, after he hath lain some Weeks in the Water, will be at least 30 or 40 Inches in Circumference; this gradual dilatation of the Body, I conceive is the sole cause of its rising to the Surface of the Water, after some certain time, and also of its more or less boyantness afterwards.

Having given you my thoughts concerning the cause of drowning, of the Floating of their Corps afterwards; I shall now acquaint you with my Notions why Bodies thrown Dead into the Water do not sink, and why some are more boyant than others.

It is observable, that Humane Bodies after Death admit no Water, especially Suffocated, as the Experiment made some Weeks since, doth evidently Demonstrate; because, as soon as Death seizes a Man,

Man, the Sphincter Muscles in all parts do naturally contract themselves, for which reason, it is not so easie to inject any Liquids into the parts that have them, as before; by this Seclusion of Water, the Vacuities (which in drowned Creatures are full of Water) are in those that come by their Death some other way, full of Air, which by natural Experiments, is proved to be as Thousand Times lighter than Water; and by the same sort of Experiments, solid Flesh is observed to be but a little heavier than Water; if you grant this, which is easily demonstrated, it will be no hard matter for any considerate Man to believe that Flesh (which hath many large Cavities in it, filled with Air) may Float: If you doubt the immediate Floating of Humane Bodies, thrown Dead into the Water, you may, for your Satisfaction, consult the Opinion of Sea-men, who have been the last War in several Ingagements with the *French*, or those that have been a *Guiny* Voyage; where, when they throw the Dead *Negroes* over-Board, they never lay any weight to their Feet to sink them, as they do to white Men; it is certain that all those *Negroes* do immediatly Float, I have spoken with several, lately come from thence, that if occasion were, would attest it with an Oath.

Bodies are more or less boyant, either in respect to themselves, or in respect to the *Medium* wherein they Float.

If the Person Died in the very act of Inspiration, the Lungs will be full of Air, by which the Breast will be sensibly dilated; that the filling of the *Thorax* with Air, may be a cause of Floating, is evident from those that can lye on their Backs without stir-

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ring hand or foot, it being obſervable that thoſe do fill themſelves as full of Air as they can, and that as long as they can hold their Breath they Float, but on the very inſtant of Breathing they Sink: If they have a large Cheſt, or are very Lean, they will Float the loftier.

If they are caſt into Salt Water, they will be more buoyant than in freſh, it being experimented that Ships will Sink ſome Inches lower under Water in the *Thames*, than when they were at Sea; if into deep Water, all Men obſerving they can Swim more eaſily in deep than in ſhallow Water.

On the contrary, if the Perſon died in Expiration had a ſmall Cheſt, was Fat and Fleſhy, or was thrown into freſh or ſhallow Waters, he will Swim the more under Water.

I do not perceive ſo great a diſcordancy between the Doctors that were Evidences for the King, and their Oppoſites, as ſome ſeem to inſinuate. The Witneſſes for the King depoſed, That it was their Opinion, that no Perſon ever was, or poſibly could be drowned, that had no Water in their Lungs, Stomach, &c. and that as far as they had made any obſervations on drowned Perſons, they always found great quantities of Water in the inward parts of drowned Perſons; part thereof, uſually in lifting them out of the Water, runs out of their Noſe or Mouth, that upon their diſſection, they had found conſiderable quantities of it in the Cavities of their Bodies; and that it was their Judgment, that the inward parts of drowned Perſons would putrifie in leſs than ſix Weeks time: Whether theſe are not undeniable Truths, I leave it to the determination of your ſelf, and all unbiaſſed People that have

made any real (not notional) Observations on drowned *Bodies*.

Their Learned Antagonists, whose sole endeavour and business, as far as I could perceive, was to render it a mute Case, by their strenuously urging, *That 2 or 3 Ounces of Water was sufficient to Drown a Person*, not from any Observations on Humane Bodies, but from a private Experiment on a Dog or two that was half hanged, as I am told, and I am apt to think there was some Artifice used, seeing the Experiment did not succeed, when made publickly in the River of *Thames*, by the same Person.

Dr. *Sloane* saith, that *Cases of this kind are very uncommon* (*viz.* for Mrs. *Stout* to be drowned without any Water in her) *and none of them have fallen directly under my Knowledge*; nor as I verily believe, under any other Persons, since the Creation of Man: Then he tells you that *Water swallowed by the Gullet, into the Stomach, will not drown the Person* (Who said the contrary?) *But it is that which goes into the Wind-pipe and Lungs that Suffocates*; and confirms it with an Observation, saying, I have observ'd *Some Spoonfuls (if it went the wrong way) to have choaked or suffocated the Person.* Note, he doth not say drowned, neither do I think any Person can properly be said to be drowned, that hath not swallowed above 2 or 3 Ounces of Water, but rather such are (as the Doctor saith) choaked or suffocated; in the same Paragraph he tells you, that *Whether a Person comes Dead or a-live into the Water, he believes some quantity will go into the Wind-pipe*: Then Water in the Wind-pipe is no certain Sign of a drowned Person, I am of another Opinion, which our Experiment doth seem undeniably to prove.

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Being asked by the Judge, Whether the parts would not putrifie in leſs than ſix Weeks, if there had been Water? His Anſwer was, *My Lord, I am apt to think it would have putrified the Stomach leſs than the Lungs:* How direct and ſatisfactory this anſwer was to the Queſtion, you may determine. I obſerve a general Queſtion, for what intention I cannot Divine; which was, Whether any Water would go into the Thorax? If it did, or did not, I cannot conceive what benefit or prejudice it would be to this Caſe, though I am apt to think the Membrane that inveſts the Lungs, may eaſily be torn by violent Coughing, which is obſerved in all Perſons when any thing falls into the Wind-pipe.

Near the foot of his Diſcourſe, he ſaith, *I am apt to think if there was any quantity* (of Water) *in the Lungs, the Sponginess of the part would ſuck up ſome part of it*; Who ſaid the contrary? But Doctor, If they had ſuck'd up any part, would not her Lungs have been moiſter, than if they had ſuck'd up none; but Mrs. *Straw's* were rather dryer than uſually they are in dead Perſons; therefore —— *As to the Stomach I have not know it tryed,* Have you known it tryed as to the Lungs? If not, we are as much in the dark as before, unleſs we take your *I am apt to think* for Demonſtration.

This Doctor cloſes his Sentiments with *If there was a great Fermentation, a great deal of it* (Water) *would riſe up in Vapours or Steams, and go off that way:* Here he terminates all with an *If:* Suppoſe I ſhould grant him there was a great Fermentation, to be as true, as I am confident 'tis falſe; his inference I doubt would not follow, *viz.* that *a great deal of it would riſe up in Vapours or Steams, and go off that way*; if it ſhould

rise into Vapours in the Stomach, I am subject to believe that the coldness of the parts through which they must pass, would condence them again, before they could get out of the Body; what way he means by *That Way*, I cannot imagine; if 'tis through the Gullet, the contraction of the Mouth of the Stomach, Gullet (which is as Dr. *Garb* says) contracted or purſed up by a Muſcle in the nature of a Sphincter, and the cloſure of the Lips, *&c.* would either keep them in the Stomach, or elſe the coldneſs of the part through which they muſt of neceſſity paſs, would condenſe them in their paſſage out of the Body; if through the Guts, the *Pylorus*, the coldneſs of the Guts or the *Sphincterani*, would obſtruct their paſſage, if it could be imagined that the Subtleneſs of theſe Vapours could get throw the *Coats* of the Stomach; I conceive the coldneſs of the *Omentum Peritonæum*, and the thickneſs of the *Muſcles*, *Fat*, &c. of the *Abdomen*, would impede their *Exit* out of the Body: In fine, it ſeems very probable to me, that if there had been any fumes raiſed in the Stomach, by Fermentation, that they could never get an *Exit* through ſo many impediments.

Dr. *Garb* tells you, that *It is impoſſible that the Body* (of Mrs. *Stout*) *ſhould have Floated, unleſs it had reſted, or been intangled amongſt the Stakes*: This is a certain Truth, if ſhe had been drowned, but if ſhe was thrown in Dead, there is nothing more common than for it to Float; and this my Aſſertion, is conſentaneous to the Univerſal Experience of thoſe Seamen that uſe the *Negro* Trade; for when any of their Slaves dye, they throw them over-Board, without any weight to their Feet, and theſe Float immediately.

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That she was found Sideling in the Water, is a mighty Argument with this Doctor that she did not Float; but grant she was intangled (which is denied by several) between the Stakes, as 'tis asserted, I think it no greater Wonder, than for a Deal Board 12 Inches broad (which should accidentally get edgwise between two Stakes not above 9 Inches distant one from the other) to Float edgeling, as long as 'tis intangled between them: Nay, on the contrary, I think it morally impossible for any Body that is much broader, than 'tis thick, if it casually gets edgewise between to Stakes, whose distance will not let it lye flat, but it must continue more or less edgeling, till 'tis dis-intangled.

I observe the Judge asked this Gentleman, Whether Water in the Body would putrifie it? He answered, *I say not, for in some places they keep Flesh-Meat from corrupting, by preserving it in Water:* If he means Water in a deep Well will keep it a day or two in hot Countries, I may admit it; but that it will keep it six Weeks or more, I utterly deny it; if it will not keep Flesh from Putrifaction 46 Days, it hath little Analogy with the Case under Debate.

This Doctor tells you, *He must differ from him* (Mr. *Coatsworth*) *where he infers, She was murthered, because he found no great quantity of Water in her:* This is a Mistake, for neither he, nor any of the other Doctors, or Surgeons, that were present at her Dissection, inferr'd she was murdered, because she had no great quantity of Water in her; but, because she had none at all in her.

Dr. *Morley*

Dr. *Morley* saith, that *These which seem to be the Questions of greatest Moment, are, Whether there was a necessity for this Body (if drowned) to have a great quantity of Water in it; and whether Bodies thrown Dead into the Water Float? To the first I answer positively, That there is no absolute necessity there she should have a great quantity of Water in her.* With submission, Doctor, pray tell which of your Opposites said there was an absolute necessity for Mrs. *Stout* to have a great quantity of Water in her; they said, they could not conceive that she was drowned, that had not one drop of Water in her; if you would have contradicted them, you should have demonstrated to the Jury, either by Reason or Experiments, how a Person might be drowned without any Water in them; if you could have done this, you had answered the Question of greatest Moment.

This Doctors difference between Persons drowned by Accident or Design, I would flatter my self, was rather a *lapsus linguæ*, than his real Judgment; for it is certain, with whatsomever design a Man may go into the Water, before he is half Dead he is deprived of his Senses, and how he governs himself then, you may Judge: To *The 2d Question*, he saith, *I think if Bodies new killed Float, 'tis by Accident*: It is as accidental for Bodies new killed, when thrown into the Water, to Sink, as 'tis for Persons just drowned to Swim.

Dr. *Woolaston* being asked his Opinion, *If a Person be drowned, Whether it can be discovered six Weeks after?* His answer was, *I think it impossible to be known*: I am apt to be of his Opinion, that 'tis impossible precisely to determine what, and how many Injuries her *Viscera* had received, or what Accidents

cidents had happened unto them 46 days after any Person is drowned; for naturally they would have been putrified in half that time; and when the Bowels are reduced into a *Putrilaginous Mucilage*, who can give a rational judgment concerning their former Figure, Position, or how they had been affected? This is what naturally happens to a drowned Person; but there was nothing of this in Mrs. *Stout*, which is no small Argument with me, that she was not drowned; I shall take little notice how he contradicts his Brothers, by his affirming, *That in drowned Persons, the Water lyes only in the Stomach and Guts:* As to his Experience, I doubt he is not candid; for I believe I have heard the same Story, which was thus, Two Man quarrelling in a *Wherry*, one of them took up the Stretcher, and knock'd the other down; in his falling, he accidentally caught hold of his Adversary, and they both fell into the Water together; he that was knock'd down was not swell'd, but the other was exceedingly.

Mr. *Cooper* affirms, *That it is not reasonable* (in Mrs. *Stout*, though drowned) *to expect any thing but Froath:* What, will all the Water turn to Froath, that a dying Person receives before he is drowned?? Tis a Paradox to me: How contrary this Surgeon's Sentiments are to the Universal Experience of the Learned and Unlearned part of Mankind, let the unbiass'd judge? If he had consulted *Ambrose Parey*, and had thought him a reasonable Man, doubtless he would have been of another Opinion, who saith, *The Belly of him that was thrown in a-live, will be swollen or puffed up by reason of the Water that is contained therein.*

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The whole ſtreſs of this Gentleman's Arguments ſeem to depend on a ſuppoſed difference, that there is between Perſons that Drown themſelves, and thoſe that are caſually ſuffocated by Water; whereas I am apt to think there is little more difference, than between one that puts the Halter about his own Neck, and one that the Hang-man forceth it on; here is a parity of cauſes, why the effects in the ſame Species ſhould extremely differ, is more than my weak intellect can comprehend; in both I conceive that in leſs than a Minute, their Rational Faculty is ſo egregiouſly diſtorted, that nothing is done regularly or by its dictates.

The verity of his private Experiments I doubt, becauſe when he made a publick one, it infinitely contradicted his Clandeſtine ones; there is a vaſt difference in drowning a Creature in a Tub, and in a River, in ſinking him with a weight tied to him, and permitting him to Sink by his own gravity; I am not of Opinion that 'tis ridiculous to expect Water in the Cavity of the *Thorax*, tho' the Lungs had not ſuffered an Impoſtumation, or the like, for Reaſons formerly aſſigned.

Dr. *Crell* ſaith, He ſhall only *inſiſt upon what* Ambroſe Parey *relates in his Chapter of Renunciations—— He tells us, That the certain Sign of a Man's being drowned is an appearance of Froth about his Noſtrills and Mouth, which could not be, as he declares, if the Perſon had been ſtrangled, or otherwiſe killed before.* For the Confirmation, or Confutation, of theſe poſitive Aſſertions of this Learned Doctor, I ſhall give you the *Verbal* Expreſſions of *Ambroſe Parey*, *Whoſoever*, ſaith he, *is found Dead in the Waters, you ſhall know whether they were thrown into the Water alive*

alive or dead, for all the Belly of him that was thrown in alive will be swell'd and puff'd up, by reason of the Water that is contained therein; certain clammy Excrements come out of his Mouth and Noſtrils. In the foregoing Paragraph he gives you the Signs, whether one is hanged Dead or Alive; his formal Expreſſions are, *If he was hang'd alive, there will be a Foam about his Mouth, and a Foamy and Filthy Matter hanging out of his Noſtrils.* Obſerve this Author, whereon he *only* inſiſts ſaith, There is a Foam and Filthy Matter about the Mouth and Noſtrils of them that are hanged Alive. Now whether Froath at the Mouth and Noſtrils is a certain Sign of a Man's being Drowned, or whether it is not incident to Perſons that die of other Diſeaſes, any Phyſitian can eaſily determine. If you will be pleaſed to read *Paulus Zachias's Queſtiones Medico-Legales*, on the ſame Subject, you may find that he agrees with *Ambroſe Parey*, That an appearance of Foam about the Noſtrils and Mouth, is no certain Sign of Drowning. By ſuch poſitive Aſſertions of the Learned, how eaſily may the Ignorant be impoſed on? By this you may evidently ſee the difference between a Witneſs on his *Parole*, as this Gentleman was, and one upon his Oath, as the King's were.

To Mr. *Herriot* being asked by Mr. *Cooper*, What Obſervations he had made concerning this Matter? Anſwered, When I was a Surgeon in *the Fleet*, *I made it always my Obſervation, when we threw Men over-board that were killed, ſome of them Swam and ſome Sunk.* Then being Interogated by the Judge, when a Body is thrown over-board, doth it Sink or Swim? His anſwer was, *I always obſerved that it did ſink.* What Incoherence is here! Firſt, I made it always

my Observation, when we threw Men over-board, that were killed, some of them Swam, and some Sunk: And almost in the same Breath saith, I always observed, That it (a Dead Body, thrown over-board) did Sink. I am apt to be of Mr. *Herriot*'s Mind; as to his first Assertion, That Men killed in a Fight being thrown over-board, some of them Sunk, others Swam; those whose Breast and Belly are no ways injured Float, but those whose Breast and Belly are perforated, so that Water gets into their *Cavities*, through the Wound, I doubt not but they will Sink.

Mr. *Bartlett* tells you, He never *saw any Body float, tho' he had been in several Engagements.* It is very probable, he kept himself all that time in the Cock-pit, and it may be long after dressing the wounded Persons. The fittest Persons in this case to give their Observation, are Officers and Sea-Men, who are always upon Deck, and often obliged to look out, and not Surgeons, who are all the time of Engagements, secured in the Hold of the Ship.

Mr. *Conlin* saith, *There were more and greater Signs of the Stagnation of Blood on the Body of this Child, than on the Body of Mrs.* Stout. But on what parts these *more and greater Signs* were, whether on the Breast, Belly, &c. not one word. The Mother of the Child asserts, there was not the least Sign of any Stagnation of Blood on any part of her Child: She having lately had the Small-Pox, her Face where the Small-Pox had fitted, was somewhat discoloured; but it was no more discoloured, after her Drowning, than it used to be (when she was cold) before her Death; the Soil of the Water doth generally alter the Faces of People; So Mrs. *Stout* was

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not known by her Neighbours, till that was wiped off. The Settlements of Blood on Mrs. *Stout* were diſperſedly on her Ear, both ſides of her Neck, Breaſt, Arm, but on what part of the Child's Body theſe *more and greater Signs of Stagnation were*, he doth not ſpecifie, becauſe had he aſſigned any particular place, there were ſeveral preſent that would have contradicted him: General Terms are the fitteſt covers for Falſhood.

If this Gentlewoman was not Drowned, as the Doctors and Surgeons for the Priſoners ſeem to inſinuate, the *Query* then will be, How ſhe came to her End? With ſubmiſſion to better Judgments, I ſhall here offer my private Sentiments concerning it: I am induced to believe, ſhe was knocked down with a Blow on her left Ear, from the large Settlement of Blood there, which, as Mrs. *Kimpſon* Swears, was as much as her Hand could cover, and more; after ſhe was fell'd to the Ground by the Blow, it is probable, with the Gripe of a ſtrong Hand, ſhe was Throtled, from the Stagnation of Blood on both ſides of her Neck, under her Ears, which Mr. *John Dimſdall*, Jun. Swears there was; and from the Settlement of Blood on her Breaſt, I am inclined to believe, That the Perſon that Throtled her, to ſupport his Hand, that he might Gripe the ſtronger, reſted his Arm on her Breaſt, which occaſioned the Stagnation there.

The Circumſtances that induce me to think ſhe was not acceſſary to her own Death, are theſe following: Her being found without her Gown (which probably was torn in the Scuffle) and Nightrail; her Gown could not be found, though the River was diligently raked ſeveral times, till about a Week be-

fore the Trial, it was found hanging on a Stake, which the Miller had cleanſed from the Traſh that hung on it about half one hour before, and he will depoſe that it was not there then; it was torn to Raggs, without one of its Sleeves, ſome parts of it were as rotten as dirt, others firm; you might tear it (which was made of a ſort of *Norwich*-Stuff) and the Lining (which was a Silk Damask) with your Fingers, as I did: *Query*, Whether Stuff or Silk will naturally Rot ſo ſoon under Water? Here is no news of her Nightrail yet. 2. From her Floating; whereof I make no doubt, becauſe it is Sworn by ſeveral Witneſſes. 3. Becauſe her Belly was not ſwollen. 4. Becauſe no Water came out of her when lifted out of the River, nor purged out of her afterwards. 5. Becauſe her inward parts were not putrified, though her outward, that had been injured, were; which I ſuppoſe was impoſſible they ſhould have continued ſo 46 days after her Death, had there been any Water in them. 6. From the ſeveral diſtinct Setlings of Blood, which is unuſual in Drowned Perſons; if it had been occaſioned (as ſome may think) from a Blow, which ſhe received when ſhe threw her ſelf in, I am ſubject to believe, that the coldneſs of the Water, in the Month of *March*, would have hindered its Settlement in the Cutaneous parts of the Body, as it is generally obſerved to do; for what is more common than to dip a Linnen Rag, or a piece of Brown Paper, in cold Water, and apply it to a bruiſed part, to hinder the Blood from ſetling there? 7. From the continual diſturbance that Mrs. *Garret* was under, both in Mind and Body: Nevertheleſs ſhe would not diſcover it till ſhe was almoſt frighted out of her Senſes,

Senses, by the Voice, as she thought of Mrs. *Stout*, which uttered these words, *Divulge, Conceal Nothing*. 8. From what is Sworn by the *Gurrey's* against their Lodgers at the Trial, *viz. Mr.* Marson *was hot, and put by his Wigg; I see his Head was wet — they came in about 11 and 12 a Clock — she turned me off, but a Friend of mine will be even with her by this time — Her business was done — He would pass his Word, Mrs.* Sarah Stout's *Courting-Days were over — The Use-Money is paid to Night — You have Forty or Fifty Pounds for your share — Asked him, Whether the business was done? And he answered, He believed it was; but if it was not done, it would be done to Night — Pulled a Handful of Money out of his Pocket, and Swore, he would spend it all for Joy, the business was done.* 9. From the Sentiments of the *Grand-Jury*, who, after a nice Examination, were of an Opinion, That she was Murdered; as were several of the *Petty-Jury*, but by whom they did not know —

As to the Letters produced in Court, my thoughts are, they are not of a Legitimate, but of a Spurious Production. 1. Because the Stile doth no way suit her Character. 2. Because her Mother doth affirm, The Letter shown her in Court was of a smaller Character than ever she observed her Daugher to Write; neither doth her Brother think them to be *genuine*. 3. Because there was no mention made of these Letters, till the common Report of her being with Child (which had been industriously spread abroad by several, but by none more Zealously, than by a *Nominal Quaker*, her *Quondam Admirer*) was proved to be utterly False, by the Oath of several

Doctors

Doctors and Surgeons that had opened her Body.

3. Because Mr. *Mason* and Mr. *Archer*, on the Trial, Sware (and several of the *Coroners-Inquest* were ready to Swear) That Mr. *Cooper*, before the *Coroners-Inquest*, being on his Oath, deposed, *That Mrs.* Stout *was a modest Person, that he did not know of any thing that was the cause of it* (viz. her Death) *That he did not know any Person she was in Love with, but of one, whose name was* Marshall; *and Mr.* Marshall *told him, That he was always Repulsed by her.* Whether this Oath is not Diametrically Opposite to his Pleadings on the Trial, you may determine.

4. Because they did not insist on these Letters, when Mr. *Jones* said, *Indeed they have produced some Letters without a Name; but if they insist upon any thing against her Reputation, we must call our Witnesses.* If the Witnesses then present in Court (who were some of the most reputable in that Town) had been called, to speak to her Reputation, a great deal of that Dirt, that is now cast upon her, would have been wiped off. I cannot but take notice here how seemingly unwilling he was to expose the weakness of this Gentlewoman, or to meddle with her Letters, had he not *those Innocent Gentlemen to defend*; when before her Death he had shewn them to Mr. *Marshall*, a Repulsed Lover, and his Brother, and after the Trial, the Printers, who at the Trial did not take them in Short-hand, were favoured with them to be exposed to the whole World.

What concerns her Melancholly, I am induced to believe, that she was no more than is incident to all People that are Sickly, or much troubled with the Head-ach; from what her Maid Swears, *That she was ill Sometimes, and I imputed it* (Melancholly)

to

in her Head; and I know no other cause. And Mrs. *Walker* doth affert, That Mr. *Cowper* told the *Coroners Inquest*, That he did not obſerve her any ways Melancholly, that he ſhould have taken notice of, had not ſuch an accident happened; only now he remembers, That ſhe was not ſo free in Diſcourſe at Dinner as ſometimes ſhe uſed to be; and that the Diſcourſe then was chiefly between him and her Mother. Her Mother and Brother do affirm they never obſerved her Melancholly, and all her intimate Companions do affert the ſame: It is much that none but this Gentleman's Siſter, and Two or Three others, devoted to a Party, ſhould obſerve any ſuch thing.

Mr. Firmin, his Wife, and ſeveral others that were in her Company, with Mr. *Taylor*, do affirm, that ſhe did not ſay her Head-cloths would ſerve her time, or any thing like it, and that they eſteemed his Diſcourſe with her pure *Banter*; that ſhe was in her Night-dreſs, and preſently went home and put on clean Linnen: I am apt to think there are many Relations and Friends, bigotted to a Party, that will not boggle to tell a Lie, to ſave a Friend, or near Relation from ——

The afternoon before her Death, ſhe was obſerved to ſtand, to ſee the Judges make their Entrance, with her Friends, as Briſk and Airy as any there; about 4 hours before her Death, as I am told, ſhe was in Company with a Knight of that County, and ſeveral others, who obſerved her to be as Merry and Pleaſant as any amongſt them: At nine at Night, ſhe earneſtly importuned a young Gentlewoman of that Town, to tarry and lye with her that Night, as ſhe had formerly

merly done several times, which she refused then, for some particular Reasons: When Mrs. *Jones* perceived she would not tarry all Night, she invited her to Dinner next day, and told her what she had provided, and that she should be glad of her Company; not intending to go out of Doors the next day.

I am apt to think that if she had been such a furious Lover as is pretended, or had any Intention that Night to destroy her self, that she would not have fallen out with any Body about the payment of Money; much less have refused to Sign a Receit for six Pounds, which her D——ft had prepared when he paid her the Interest-Money: what was the true cause why she refused to Sign this Receit, is a Riddle to most.

If she had had so great a kindness for some Years for this *Joseph*, as is insinuated, certainly his Wife would have observed something of it; and then she would not be importuning her every Month, by her Letters, to come to *London*, that she might injoy her sweet Company: Neither would she in all probability (if she had been so desperately in love with him) have lived here several Months together, without his Company, even when importuned by his Wife; but would, as we may reasonably conjecture, have resided in your City, where she might the oftner, and more privately have injoyed his Company: And, as for her going out at the Window, it is morally impossible, the Bars being so close together, that a Child of a Year old cannot get out between them; neither was there any occasion for it, the Keys being always left in the Doors.

Be

Because there is no mention made on the Trial, of the missing of any of her Money; several are apt to report that her Relations want none of it, which is a grand Mistake; for they want, as they compute it, at least a Thousand Pounds of her Original Fortune, besides the Improvements she had made thereon, which were considerable; they made little mention of it there (that was taken notice of) because their Evidences that could speak materially to that point, were *Quakers*, whose Affirmation will not be taken in Criminal Cases.

The last Assizes, here was a Man hanged, after he was Dead, was cut down, and buried without a Coffin, the Grave filled up, and the Earth well trod down; in the Evening he was digg'd up again, being pressed almost flat by the weight of the Earth, was privately cast into the River, and when it was observed that the Corps would Sink, it was exposed to publick view, and an *Advertisement* of it was printed in the *Post Man* 25th of July last, with a great shew of Exaltation, by their saying, *Many Hundreds having seen this Experiment with their own Eyes, the Opinions of the Surgeons produced on the part of the King, is thereby destroyed and exploded, and all Persons convinced of the contrary*: What influence this Experiment may have on you, I know not; but when all the Circumstances attending it are duly considered, I am of Opinion, it will make more against them, than their Opposites: If they had been certain of Success, what need of so much Art; Why did they not insert in their *Advertisement*, how the Body had been managed before 'twas thrown into the Water, how they opened it afterwards, and how they made a strict Scrutiny after Water, yet could

 not

not find a drop in it? Not one word of this. Methinks this partial Relation is calculated on purpose to magnifie their own Evidences, and put a slur on the King's.

I doubt not but the ingenious Contrivers of this Experiment did reasonably expect it would Sink; but that it would have drawn Water in at all; I am apt to think it unreasonable, to expect that the weight of the Earth would have driven out the Wind contained in the Cavity of the Breast through the Wind-pipe, which is impossible to be done without lifting up of that Cartilage, which continually closes the Mouth of the *Asper Arteria*, but in Expiration, this being once forcibly removed out of its natural Situation, 'tis very likely that it would not cover it again so closely, but that some small quantity of Water might insinuate it self through the small passages, which the violent forcing out of the Air had made; if this had succeeded, What a Triumph there would have been, you may easily determine?

Some Weeks since, a Surgeon, that had been an Evidence at the Trial at *Hertford*, going into a Bookseller's Shop, meeting some acquaintance there, he fell into Discourse about Mrs. *Steer*, and affirmed there, what he had affirmed at the Trial, viz. That *Two or Three Quarts of Water would Drown a Dog*. One of the Company told him, he would lay a wager that so small a quantity would do the business. He replyed, *Sir, I will lay a Guinea, that I will Drown a Dog in the River of Thames, and he shall not have above Three Ounces of Water in him*. The proffer was no sooner made, than accepted, Time appointed, Dog brought, and within weight tyed to his hinder Feet, flung into the River, sometime after was taken out,

and

and diſſected; where inſtead of *Three Ounces*, there was about *Thirty Three*; whereby he not only loſt his Wager, but in a great meaſure his Reputation, as to what he had ſo confidently aſſerted to the contrary, on the Trial.

Having in ſome meaſure anſwered your Commands, that by my Silence, I am afraid, I have too much treſpaſſed on your Patience; ſhall take little notice now, what Omiſſions and Alterations there are in the Printed Trial; how Mr. *Stevens* was taken with a ſtrange ſort of a Fit, (juſt after the Petty-Jury went out) which diſturbed the whole Court; or how a *Wine-Cooper* in *Southwark* (who came down as an Evidence for the Priſoners) fell into a ſort of Diſtraction; and all the time of the Trial was ſtrangely diſcompoſed in his Mind, ſo that he was fain to be tyed in Bed, yet would often ask how the Trial went, and whether they were like to be cleared, and would often tell the People about him, that he had done a very bad thing, but would not confeſs what, though often urged to it: But ſhall conclude, deſiring that the Authors of this Horrid Murder may be detected, and brought to condign Puniſhment; but that the Innocent may be cleared from all Aſperſions thrown undeſervedly on them, which I doubt not, but that the Great *Jehovah*, in his own time, will bring to paſs. And that it may be ſo, ſhall be the dayly Prayers of

Hertford, the 5th of September, 1690.

Sir, Your Humble Servant,

P. D.

POSTSCRIPT.